

Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, April 6, 1877, with transcript

Letter from Miss Mabel Hubbard to Mr. Alexander Graham Bell. Friday, April 6th., 1877.

My dear Alec:

Mamma came home before we were out of bed this morning. We were glad to see her and to hear of your success. My dear Alec I congratulate you with all my heart. You worked hard and thoroughly deserved your success. I wish I could have been with you, but I know it was best that I should not go. Mamma was very much pleased with all she saw and heard, and I think will have more confidence in you next time.

We hear not a word more of the concerts. I suppose they go on, but so far as newspaper reports go the whole thing is an utter failure and might never have been. And therefore I am beginning to feel that it may not be so well for you to lecture here now that the curiosity is satisfied. Is there not danger that you will meet empty benches. You are only going to give one lecture, the few people who go may be interested, but as there will be not another there is no chance for others to come on hearing a good report of you. I suppose Mr. Van — (?) knows what he is about though. Another thing Mamma thinks that it is hardly advisable for you to give a double lecture, she thinks a great deal of your success last night was due to your personal magnetism. Mr. Watson at the Brooklyn end would not interest and entertain as you would. You know how afraid he is of a public appearance. Mamma thinks loss of self possession on your part would have been fatal last night, now there is great danger that Mr. Watson would commit that mistake. I have great faith in the telephone and it's powers and capabilities but I don't believe it will ever abolish concerts in which singers take part. A great deal of the charm of concerts is in the presence. The same thing is true of lectures. Still I think you will do what is best. Do not be hasty, then if you are sure of what you are about do it and I for one will believe in you. I am very

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anxious to have some Providence Papers and see what they say of it. By the way why do you let them speak of you as A . Graham I perfectly hate it when I think how handsome the full name is. I am afraid you must be very tired dear and I am so sorry I can't answer those nineteen letters from you, — I think however your success and the success of Mr. Williams' line must in a measure console you. Do you receive payment for the use of the telephones on Mr. Osgood's and other lines. It is such a great thing to have made a beginning.

Mamma enjoyed her little escapade extremely, she went off without telling her lord and master where she was going. I went to the Art Museum yesterday after seeing Mamma off and saw some lovely glass that has been buried thousands of years and shines like opals. Some queer old pottery ancient rings, combs etc. I am afraid I was too tired to appreciate my blessings in being allowed to see the Castellani Collection. I have got to darn that tear you made in my dress — Thank goodness that you are a man and don't have to darn it's the most patience trying thing I know of. Then I am going out look for summer dresses.

Ever so much love, Your own, May.

3

P.S. Mamma wants me to add again how much pleased and interested she was in your lecture. You would not doubt it if you could have heard how she went on about it all this morning. She wants me to entreat you not to give a dual lecture at all events and to say that she meant to write and tell you about it but she is going to sleep over her letter to Papa.

She has been making most unmerciful fun of the way the gentleman introduced you to the audience, she says she could not think of anything but the way Barnum would speak of a two-headed calf! She heard Mr. Watson's voice and recognized it at once.

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Did you have a pleasant visit at Mr. Blake's. Did Diame Lippitt say anything about Mr. Homer, and did she give you my note, it was hardly worth sending, but I wanted so much to send my love at least.

Mamma and I have been discussing our marriage and I really don't see how we can manage it there seems no place for us to "perform" in, it's too much for Mamma to open the house for that alone I would not consent to it. New York is out of the question, Washington seems hardly more in — unless we should live there. I begin to think that would be a nice idea, the salary would be a considerable addition to your income and I hate the long Boston winters. Still I shall be perfectly content to be where ever you wish.

With much love, none the less sincere for being repeated, Ever yours.